

## Mayor Snarr's Budget Address

April 1, 2008

Council members, residents, and staff, thank you for allowing me some time to present my recommendations for the fiscal year budget for 2008-2009.

Tonight I want to follow up on comments I made in my State of the City address. You will recall going with me on a virtual tour of our City and seeing the many wonderful changes that have recently taken place or are underway. Going on the road showcased all the ways that "There's More to Murray." I would like to focus tonight on how we can continue on that road to success.

We are just surfacing from a cold, difficult winter season. We have used overtime, additional salt and every possible vehicle to accomplish snow removal for our residents. I received a heartfelt note from one resident who wrote, "I am writing a note of thanks to you, and wish for you to extend this THANKS to all the loyal and dedicated workers who did our snow removal this whole long winter. It was a long, early morning task and they did a wonderful efficient job for all of us."

Another resident recently sent a note of thanks for the work of our Police Department in getting a residential burglary convict off the street. He feels safer with this person in jail. Our Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officers were praised recently for their work making a long standing construction site less hazardous for neighborhood children. I hear all the time about the great employees we have working for our City and how they serve our residents so well.

With the increased cost of fuel and the trickle down impact in all areas of consumer spending, I am recommending a 3% COLA adjustment this year. I realize this is more than has been done in past years and I am basing my suggestion on keeping our employees. We are an organization that serves our residents and we are only as good as the face of the City, our employees.

We continue to make progress along our road to success in completing projects in our Fire Department. The new Station 82 will be complete in a few months and it, along with the new Station 83, will be paid for by reserves from past good economic years.

We have submitted a request to the State for a license to operate an ambulance service for emergency calls. If this request is granted, we have funding in place to staff and equip the operation. Our current Station 82, located at 150 East 5900 South, will be available to house the ambulances. We believe this service will be paid for by the charges associated with its use. If the license is granted, we hope to begin this program in the fall.

Three ambulances will need to be purchased. We also need a new ladder truck in the Fire Department. Our current ladder truck is 11 years old and is requiring constant repair. I am proposing paying \$500,000 as a down payment on the ladder truck and then a five year lease purchase plan for these vehicles totaling about \$1.1 million dollars.

Our Power Department has had some circumstances change this year necessitating a request for a power rate increase. Two main factors have lead us to this challenge. First, we have had to replace a low cost resource from Idaho with a more expensive one. The length of the contract was completed and renewing it at a much higher rate was not feasible. This loss is \$900,000 annually. Second, we get a portion of our power from CRSP, the Colorado River Storage Project. Rates for this renewable resource are controlled by the Bureau of Reclamation, who increased them this year by 15%. In order to make this as painless as possible for our residents and businesses, we are proposing increasing the rates by 5% on July 1<sup>st</sup> and then adding another 5% on October 1<sup>st</sup>. It is our hope this will get us through the high summer usage months without too much difficulty. Our Power Department has worked very hard to provide great reliability and I believe we all recognize the value this service gives us daily.

Our City is a pledging City in the UTOPIA network. About 60% of the City currently has the option to connect to providers bringing their services through the fiber. Due to a variety of unforeseen circumstances and delays, it has been determined that the pledge amount should be increased and the bond term extended. I am recommending \$250,000 be added to our pledge amount in reserves to cover this increase.

Our Murray Parks have long been a source of fun, recreation, relaxation and green space in our City. The last master plan for parks was completed in 1994. Since that time, most of the recommendations that were adopted have been accomplished. I believe it is appropriate to undertake a new planning process with regard to our parks and have included funding to do so in my budget.

Finally, having a road to success is accomplished by having good roads to drive on. In the recent legislative session, our local legislators and county council members, helped our City road budget by providing us with \$1million for Cottonwood Street improvements. We will use these funds to accomplish as much as possible on this newly expanded north - south corridor. I am proposing putting \$1.3 million into other local projects There is never enough money to cover the needs we have on our local roads. I believe we have been conservative in our budget numbers while keeping an eye on current economic factors. If additional funds are available as the year progresses, I will recommend working on more road projects.

I believe our united goal is to continue on the road to success that we have already established. "There is More to Murray" is a statement we want all our residents to appreciate and enjoy each day.